A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, May 10. 1707.

IN my Addreſſing all Parties to reconcile common Differences in Matters, to Charity and good Neighbourhood, or in my modern Phraſe, *to Union Principles*; I cannot let ſlip a Paper preſented to our *Northern* Brethren on this Head, tho' it may look here like a Digreſſion.

A Voice from the South: *Or an Addreſs from ſome* Proteſtant Diſſenters *in* England *to the Kirk of* Scotland.

Brethren,

AS Nothing has been more univerſally deſir'd by us in this Nation, ſince the Revolution, than the happy Union now brought to paſs; So nothing has been more ſurprizing to us, and to all that wiſh well to the Intereſt of the Proteſtant Religion, than the ſtrange and unexpected Oppoſition made in *Scotland* againſt the Treaty, and the yet remaining Feats and Jealouſies which appear among you about it.

If *Papiſts*, *Jacobites*, Men of diviſing Principles or Jarring Intereſts had appear'd againſt the Union, it had been nothing, but what we might have had Reaſon to expect; but that good Men, Men

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of Religion, of Sobriety, Men that had ſuffer'd ſuch ſevere things under the Tyranny of former Reigns, ſhould not ſee in this their Day, the Things which belonged to the Civil and Religious Peace: This has indeed been Matter of Amazement to us, and all that wiſh you well, are under exceeding Concern about you.

This Paper is not deſign'd to make Reflections on things paſt, much leſs on Perſons; the Deſign is ſincere, the Method ſhall be friendly, and we hope you will take it with the ſame Temper it is offer'd, *viz.* A Civil Expoſtulation, and Neighbourly Advice: If it is miſtaken, the Error wil lie at the Door of thoſe, that, by falſe Conſtructions, impoſe upon your Underſtandings.

The Union is now paſt, and all Articles between the Nations fully concluded, ratify'd, exchang'd, and recorded in both Kingdoms: And 'tis but a very few Days, that we ſhall, to the Envy and Diſappointment of all the World, become one Nation, one Kingdom, one People, United in all our Civil Intereſts, and we hope, reconciled in a mutual Settlement, Security, and Eſtabliſh'd Bounds of our Religious Intereſts.

There remains no more Struggle, no more Oppoſition, no Debate about the Union it ſelf, and therefore this Paper ſhall ſay nothing to it, but as of a thing finiſh'd and done: The thing now before us all is, to endeavour on all ſides to take the real Benefit of the Union, and not by Diviſions, Diſtruſt, and unneceſſary Debates, to deprive our ſelves of the Advantages of it, and make it that Curſe to us all, which groundleſs Fears have ſuggeſted, and which the open Enemies of both have deſir'd.

What the preſent ſuggeſted Miſchiefs of the Union are, how your Heads are fill'd with Diſtruſts of your Brethren, and with Apprehenſions of Politick Deſigns againſt you, we ſhall not much enquire——, ſince the Buſineſs before us now is to heal, not to wound, to clear up Doubts, not encreaſe Debates; and we believe the ſetting things before you in a clearer Light, will bring us all to the Bleſſed Temper of Love, Charity and Peace, which only can make the Union a Bleſſing to us.

We rather therefore chooſe to expoſtulate with you of things to come, than of things paſt, and to entreat you not to turn this Mercy into a Judgment by too unthankful a Temper, a thing of which we have frequent Inſtances in the World.

And in order to this, we humbly deſire you calmly to conſider a few Particulars.

1. What have you to look back upon, and be thankful for, that GOD Almighty never put it into the Hearts of theſe Nations to unite, when Epiſcopacy was eſtabliſh'd here among you.

   And in this Head you might obſerve, 1. How eaſie it had been for the late King *Charles* II. or King *James* II. who had ſo Arbitrary a Command here, and ſuch Tools to ſerve them, to have brought it to paſs.

   2. What Uſe they would long ſince have made of ſuch an Addition of Power to have entirely ſuppreſt the Presbyterian Kirk, and human Probability conſidered, have for ever kept her down.

   That had an Union been ſo formed under the Settlement of an Epiſcopal Church, there had never been a legal Door open'd in theſe Nations to have retriev'd it, but by the Nature and Conſtitution of the Treaty, that Settlement had been as the Presbyterian Settlement now is, unalterable, and indiſſolvable, and in oppoſing it, both Nations had been bound to have oppoſed and ſubdued you.

3. You are deſired to look a little back into the former precarious Condition of your own Eſtabliſhment, how liable to daily Invaſions at Home, and from Abroad, how mated with, and ſometimes inſulted by returning Prelacy, the Inſolence and Numbers of Popiſh, Jacobite, or worſe Enemies; how ſubject to the wav'ring and very alterable Temper of a few Gentlemen, how weakly ſupported, and how ill qualified or circumſtanced to obtain foreign Supports, but from a Country where the Presbyterian Kirk would find but little Aſſiſtance——, and not to enter

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too far into the Weakneſs of your Condition in that Caſe known well enough to your ſelves, we leave it under a general Note, and refer it as an Appeal to your own ſerious Reflection to determine about.

4. You are deſired to look forward, and conſider what you have to be thankful for, that the Presbyterian Settlement of *Scotland* has now received a Sanction or Recognition, even from that ſame Epiſcopal Power which alone could be ſuſpected of a Willingneſs to pull her down, That you have the very Votes of the Biſhops themſelves to your Church Eſtabliſhment, binding themſelves and their Poſterity, *viz.* The whole *Engliſh* Strength and Conſtitution, to uphold, ſupport, maintain and defend you, next to Divine Protection, we cannot ſee how all the Policy of Man could deviſe for you a more ſubſtantial Security; and we do confeſs our ſelves under ſome Surprize, that any among you can complain for Want of Security, ſince the Church of *England* cannot now offer you the leaſt Moleſtation, without flying in the Face of their own Conſtitution, unravelling their own Foundation, and diſſolving a Treaty which we hope they will always have as much occaſion to depend upon as any of us all.

Being thus Eſtabliſh'd, we cannot think you will encourage the Murmurs and Diſcontents of theſe People, who firſt propheſying the evil Effects of this Union, ſeem themſelves too willing to bring to paſs their Predictions.

It is the full Perſwaſion of all your Brethren the Diſſenters, That your Church is eſtabliſh'd upon a laſting, an indiſſolvable, and an unalterable Foundation, and you cannot, without ſome Ignorance, and great Unkindneſs, ſuſpect them of not deſiring it ſhould be ſo.

The *Diſſenters* in *England* look upon themſelves, to have but one Intereſt with you: And, as they have earneſtly pray'd to GOD Almighty, to bring this joyful Day to Light, ſo they, with their utmoſt Chearfulneſs, are dayly giving Thanks for the Bleſſing, as it is your Safety equally with their own; they rejoyce, that Heaven has heard their Prayers; and have no Sorrow before them, ſave that which ariſes from the Mortification they have, to ſee ſome among you not ſo free to joyn with them, and whoſe Eyes are not open to the great Bleſſing of this Union equally with theirs.

They are ſorry, that any amongſt you ſhould attempt to leſſen that mutual Confidence, which they think ſo abſolutely neceſſary between you and them: And as they, on their Part, have done nothing, to cauſe any Suſpicions of their Conduct to be juſtly raiſed, with Reſpect to their Brethren in *Scotland*, ſo they cannot but hope, the Church of *Scotland* will give ſome general and publick Teſtimony, that thoſe Diſtruſts and Suggeſtions are far from being the Senſe of the whole Body.

It cannot but be evident to every Man that has the leaſt Senſe, upon his Mind, of the preſent Circumſtances of both Kingdoms, both Civil and Religious, That nothing can contribute more to the making us all ſenſible of the proſperous Effects of this Treaty, than the mutual Confidence, Harmony, and Brotherly Correſpondence between all Sorts of Proteſtants in the whole Iſland, but eſpecially between the *Diſſenters* in *England* and the Kirk of *Scotland*, as being inſeparably bound by the ſame Intereſt, and uncapable to be hurt or overthrown aſunder, but to their mutual Injury, publick Weakning, and expoſing them all to the Power of their Enemies: And thoſe who are of another Opinion, are deſired ſeriouſly to conſider, who they are, that generally ſpeaking, all over *Britain*, were deſirous of this Union, and who againſt it; who are now pleas'd with it, and who ſnarl at, and find Faults with it, and what are their known reſpective Principles and Practices; but this ſhall be ſpoken to in our next.

ADVER-

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